



IT'S YOUR CALL

Operation S.A.V.E

IDVA CVSO Training Edition –
June 2015



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

**Veterans
Crisis Line**



1-800-273-8255
PRESS 1

VeteransCrisisLine.net
or text to **838255**

Confidential help for Veterans and their families and friends

Objectives

- Understand the scope of suicide within the U.S.
- Identify Veterans at risk for suicide
- Know what to do when you identify a Veteran at risk

Suicide in the United States

- **40,600** annual deaths by suicide among U.S. population
- Suicide is the **10th** leading cause of death in the U.S.
 - **2nd** leading cause of death for 15-24 years of age
- **16,688** U.S. deaths from homicide per year
 - Less than 1/2 the number of annual suicides
- Homicide is the **16th** leading cause of death in the U.S.
- Of the top 10 causes of death in 2012, **only suicide** showed a significant increase from 2011 levels





VA
HEALTH
CARE

Defining
EXCELLENCE
in the 21st Century

5

were involved in
VHA services

17

were unknown to
VHA

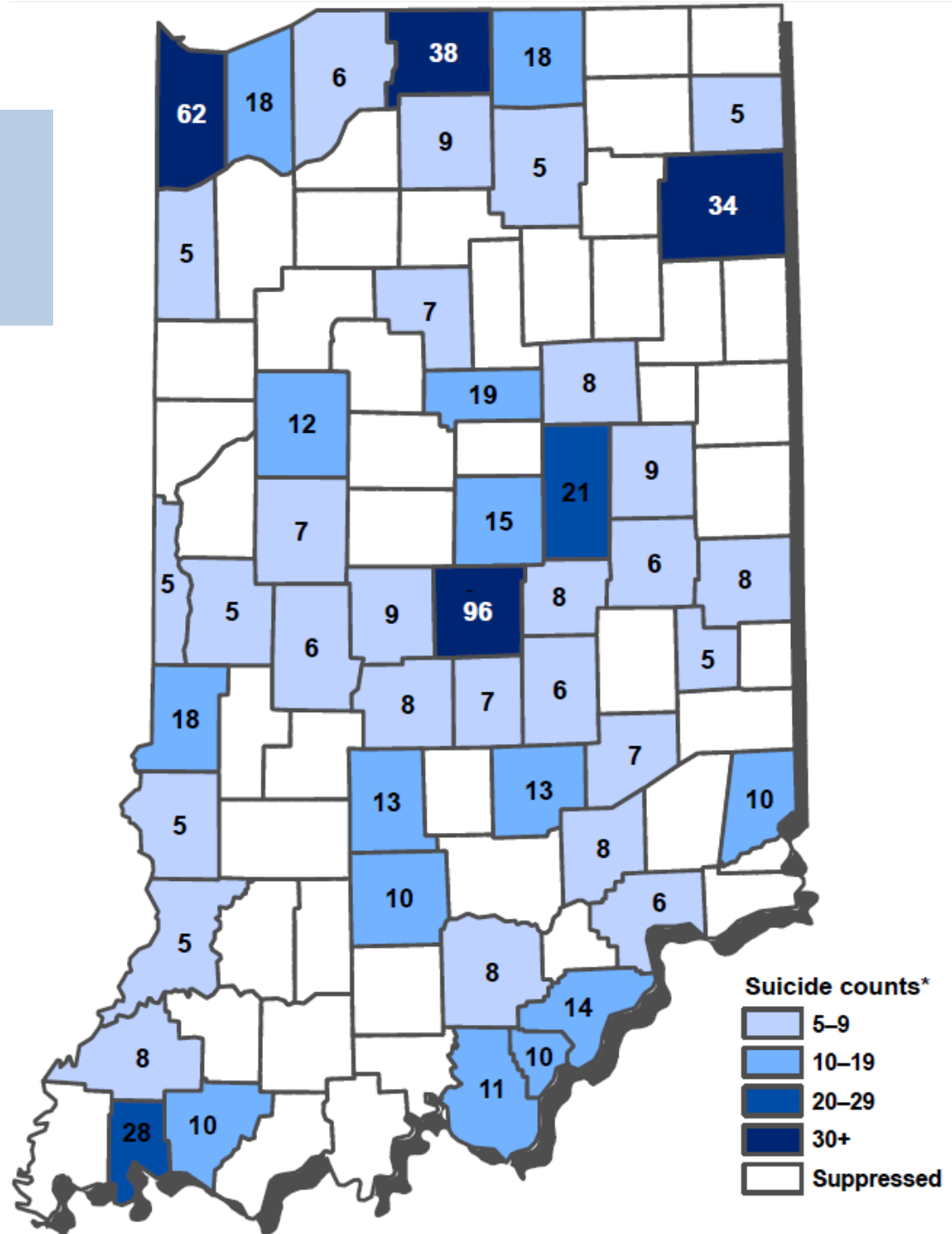


2007-2011

751 Indiana Veteran
suicides

~10 Indiana Veterans
die by suicide each
month who have no
connection to the VA.

Indiana State Department of
Health – Suicide in Indiana Report
(Sept. 2013)



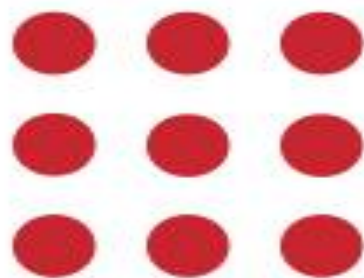
How can we work together to find the 17 before they become a statistic?



More Facts About Veteran Suicide

- ~20 percent of U.S. deaths from suicide are Veterans
(*National Violent Death Reporting System*)
- Almost 70% of male Veterans completing suicide were age 50 years and older
 - (*VA Suicide Data Report, 2012*)
- Veterans are more likely than the general population to use firearms for suicide
(*National Violent Death Reporting System*)
- Firearms were the most common means for suicide, and overdoses represented the most common means for attempts
(*VA Suicide Data Report, 2012*)

Veterans Crisis Line

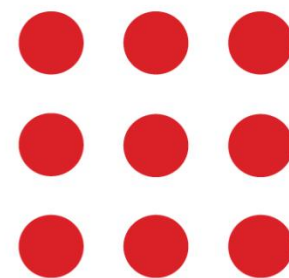


1-800-273-8255

PRESS 1



Veterans Crisis Line



1-800-273-8255

PRESS 1

SuicidePreventionLifeline.org

Get Help

Materials

Get Involved

Crisis Centers

Newsroom

About

Dial **1-800-273-8255 PRESS 1**Text to **838255**

Confidential Veterans Ch

I am **Veteran**I am **Active Duty/Reserve and Guard**I am **Family/Friend**

Confidential Help for Veterans and Their Families

Signs of Crisis

Resources

Get Help

About



"I AM A VETERAN.

Just like we rely on our friends, family and tribe to help us through tough times, the Veterans Crisis Line is also there to help if you ever need it."

Frank Aguino
U.S. Navy, 1963-1967



Welcome to the Veterans Crisis Line Website

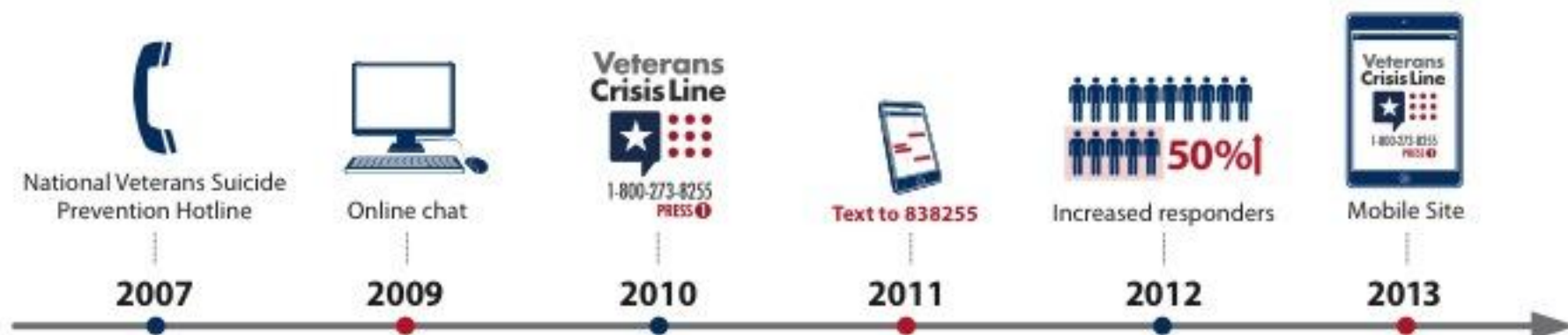
The Veterans Crisis Line connects Veterans in crisis and their families and friends with qualified, caring Department of Veterans Affairs responders through a confidential toll-free hotline, online chat, or text. Veterans and their loved ones can call **1-800-273-8255** and **Press 1**, **chat online**, or send a text message to **838255** to receive confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. [More about the Veterans Crisis Line](#)

Are You a Veteran or Concerned About One?

Act Now

Dial **1-800-273-8255 PRESS 1**
to talk to someone NOW

Learn Now





hearing individuals is available.

[More about the Veterans Crisis Line](#)

Are You a Veteran or Concerned About One?

Act Now

Dial **1-800-273-8255** **PRESS 1**
to talk to someone NOW

Confidential Veterans Chat

Text to 838255 to Get Help NOW

Take a Self-Check Quiz

Confidential Homeless Veterans Chat

Support for Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Learn Now

Identify the Warning Signs

Concerned About a Veteran? You Can Help

Suicide and Crisis Resources

About the Veterans Crisis Line

Lost: The Power of One Connection [More Videos](#)



Resource Locator



If you or a Veteran you know is in crisis, [find a facility](#) near you.

Spread the Word



Resource Locator

Locate Information and Resources

No matter what you are experiencing, there is support for getting your life on a better track. To find the Veteran resources most helpful for you, fill in your ZIP code or state below and check the boxes of the programs or topics you are interested in. You can also select the National Resource Directory tab to find additional Veteran services.



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Resources



National Resource Directory Resources

1 Select a Resource

☒ **Suicide Prevention Coordinators**

Specially trained Suicide Prevention Coordinators or teams are available at all VA Medical Centers across the country.

☐ **Crisis Centers**

Search for community-based crisis centers in your area.

☐ **VA Medical Centers**

VA Medical Centers offer a range of acute care and community-based outpatient services, including mental health care, diagnostics, homeless and alcohol/drug abuse programs, nursing home and respite care.

☐ **Outpatient Clinics**

Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs) are local VA locations that provide primary care, counseling, laboratory analysis, prescriptions and radiology services.

☐ **Veterans Benefits Administration Offices**

Veterans Benefits Administration Offices provide services to Veterans seeking benefits related to compensation, pension, vocational rehabilitation, home loans, death benefits, employment, and disability.

☐ **Vet Centers**

Vet Centers provide readjustment counseling and outreach services to all Veterans who have served in any combat zone, as well as their family members.

☐ **All**

See all VA and community-based services in your area.

2 Choose Location

Search by Zip Code

Search

OR

Search by state

Dial

1-800-273-8255 PRESS 1

to talk to someone NOW

Click Now for Confidential
Live Veterans Chat

Text to
838255

Resource Locator



If you or a Veteran you know is in crisis, **find a facility** near you.

Spread the Word



Download **logos**, **Web ads**, and **materials** and help get the word out.

Take a Self-Check Quiz

2 Choose Location

Search by Zip Code — OR — Search by state

Results for **Suicide Prevention Coordinators** in zip code **46202**

Field, Travis

approx. 0 miles away
Indianapolis, IN 46202
P: 317-988-3213
F: 317-988-2884
Travis.field2@va.gov

Chauhan, Sandra

approx. 57.8 miles away
Marion, IN 46953-4589
P: 800-360-8387x72959
F: 765-677-5151
sandra.chauhan@va.gov

Long, Natalie

approx. 81.3 miles away
Danville, IL 61832-5198
P: 217-554-5138
F: 217-554-4815
vhadanhotlinereferrals@va.gov

Kipfer, Sharon

approx. 98.1 miles away
Cincinnati, OH 45220
P: 513-861-3100x6684
F: 513-249-8920
vhacinhotlinereceivers@va.gov

Wolfe, Karon

approx. 101.4 miles away
Dayton, OH 45428
P: 937-268-6511x2675
F: 937-267-5354
karon.wolfe@va.gov

Chauhan, Sandra

approx. 105.8 miles away
Fort Wayne, IN 46805
P: 800-360-8387x72959
F: 765-677-5151
sandra.chauhan@va.gov

hagman, Stacy

approx. 108.6 miles away
Louisville, KY 40206
P: 502-287-4011
F: 502-287-6892
stacy.hagman@va.gov

Willis-Nichols, Rebecca

approx. 149.6 miles away
Lexington, KY 40502-2236
P: 859-233-4511x3223
F: 859-281-3982
rebecca.willis-nichols@va.gov

Langlois, Michelle

approx. 165.1 miles away
Chicago, IL 60612
P: 312-569-8009
F: 312-569-8083

Blacconiere, Maryann

approx. 167.5 miles away
Hines, IL 60141
P: 708-202-2107
F: 708-202-4700

[Take a Self-Check Quiz](#)



Chicago, Illinois

Jesse Brown VA
Suicide Prevention
Coordinator

312-569-8009

Danville, Illinois

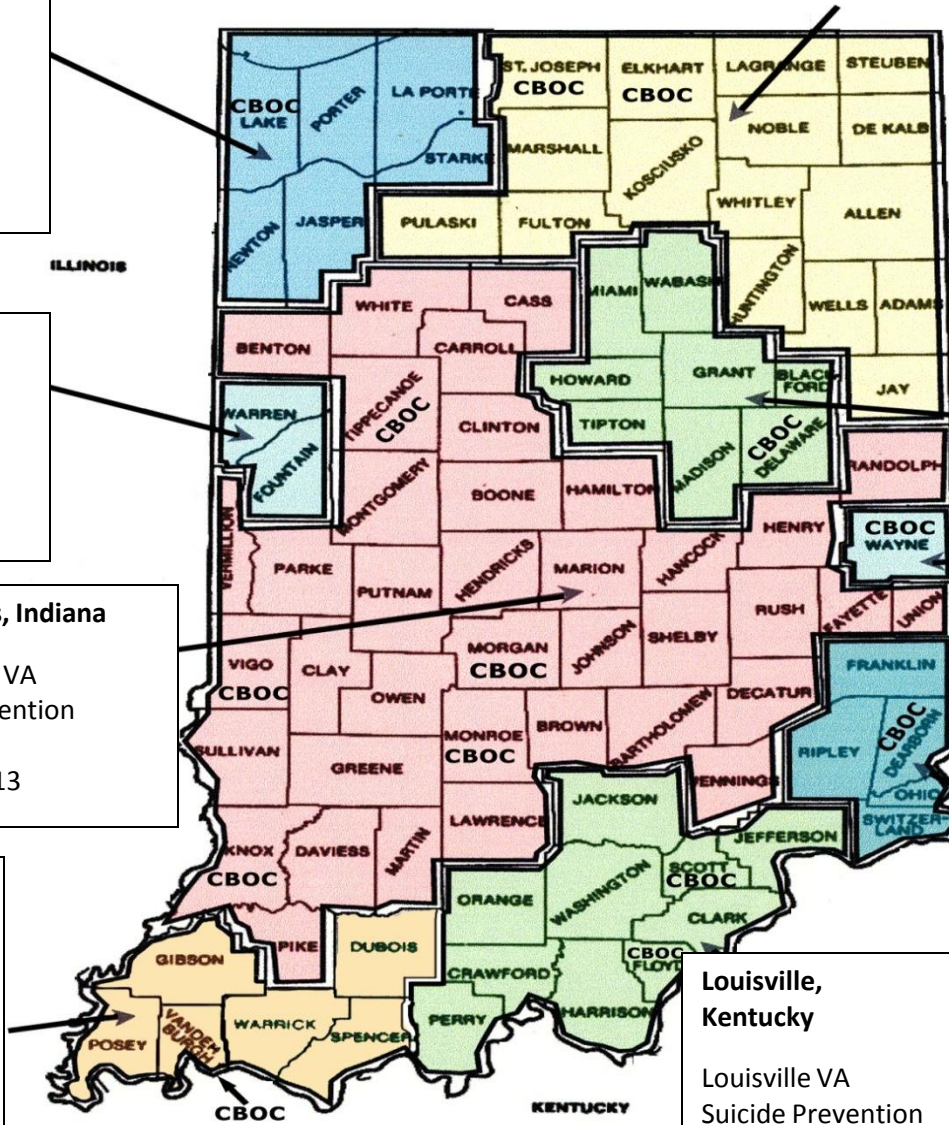
Danville VA
Suicide Prevention
Coordinator
217-554-3163

Indianapolis, Indiana

Indianapolis VA
Suicide Prevention
Coordinator
317-988-3213

Marion, Illinois

Marion (IL) VA
Suicide Prevention
Coordinator
618-997-5311
x54211



Ft. Wayne & Marion, Indiana

Northern Indiana
Healthcare System –
Ft. Wayne & Marion
VA campuses

Suicide Prevention
Coordinator
800-360-8387
x75075

Dayton, Ohio

Dayton VA
Suicide Prevention
Coordinator
937-268-6511
x1849

Cincinnati, Ohio

Cincinnati VA
Suicide Prevention
Coordinator
513-861-3100
x6900

Louisville, Kentucky

Louisville VA
Suicide Prevention
Coordinator
502-287-4011

VA Suicide Prevention Program

Provide Enhanced Care following “high risk” suicidal behavior

- Maintain a “high risk” list
- Assign Suicide Prevention Case Manager for 90 days
 - Maintain regular contacts
 - Consult with providers
 - Suicide Risk Assessment and Safety Planning
 - Tracking appointments
 - Follow up with missed appointments
 - Individualized strategies for treatment and means reduction
 - Coordinating referrals & services
 - Postvention reporting and family outreach

Typical myths and realities

Myth or reality: Asking about suicide may lead to someone taking his or her life.

Typical myths and realities

Reality: Asking about suicide does not create suicidal thoughts. The act of asking the question simply gives the veteran permission to talk about his or her thoughts or feelings.

Typical myths and realities

Myth or reality: If somebody really wants to die by suicide, there is nothing you can do about it.

Typical myths and realities

Reality: Most suicidal ideas are associated with treatable disorders. Helping someone find a safe environment for treatment can save a life. The acute risk for suicide is often time-limited. If you can help the person survive the immediate crisis and overcome the strong intent to die by suicide, you have gone a long way toward promoting a positive outcome.

Typical myths and realities

Myth or reality: He/she really wouldn't die by suicide because...

- he just made plans for a vacation
- she has young children at home
- he made a verbal or written promise
- she knows how dearly her family loves her

Typical myths and realities

Reality: The intent to die can override any rational thinking. Someone experiencing suicidal ideation or intent must be taken seriously and referred to a clinical provider who can further evaluate their condition and provide treatment as appropriate.

Operation S.A.V.E.

Operation S.A.V.E. will help you act with care and compassion if you encounter a Veteran who is in suicidal crisis. The acronym “S.A.V.E.” helps one remember the important steps involved in suicide prevention:

- **S**igns of suicidal thinking should be recognized
- **A**sk the most important question of all
- **V**alidate the Veteran’s experience
- **E**ncourage treatment and **E**xpedite getting help

Importance of identifying warning signs

- Many Veterans may not show any signs of intent to harm themselves before doing so
- There are behaviors which may be signs that a Veteran needs help
- Veterans in crisis may show behaviors that indicate a risk of harming themselves

Signs of suicidal thinking

- **I:** Ideation
 - **S:** Substance Abuse
 - **P:** Purposelessness
 - **A:** Anxiety
 - **T:** Trapped
 - **H:** Hopelessness
 - **W:** Withdrawal
 - **A:** Anger
 - **R:** Recklessness
 - **M:** Mood Change
- **Perceived Burdensomeness**
 - **Thwarted Belongingness**
- **Acute experiences**
 - Break ups, being fired, arrested, evicted, assaulted
 - **Chronic Stressors (Ongoing difficulties)**
 - Unemployment
 - Unstable housing, homeless
 - Excessive debt, poor finances
 - Legal problems
 - Lack of social support
 - Poor interpersonal relationships
 - Geographic isolation from support
 - Barriers to accessing mental health care

Signs of suicidal thinking

- **The presence of any of the following signs requires immediate attention:**
 - Thinking about hurting or killing themselves
 - Looking for ways to die
 - Talking about death, dying or suicide
 - Self-destructive or risk-taking behavior, especially when it involves alcohol, drugs or weapons

Asking the question

- Know how to ask the most important question of all...

Asking the question

- Are you thinking about killing yourself?
- Have you had thoughts about taking your own life?
- Are you thinking of suicide?

Asking the question

DO ask the question if you've identified warning signs or symptoms

DO ask the question in such a way that is natural and flows with the conversation

DON'T ask the question as though you are looking for a "no" answer

- "You aren't thinking of killing yourself are you?"

DON'T wait to ask the question when he/she is halfway out the door

When talking to a Veteran about suicide

- Remain calm
- Listen more than you speak
- Maintain eye contact
- Act with confidence
- Do not argue
- Use open body language
- Limit questions-let the Veteran do the talking
- Use supportive, encouraging comments
- Be honest-there are no quick solutions but help is available

Validate the Veteran's experience

- Talk openly about suicide. Be willing to listen and allow the Veteran to express his or her feelings.
- Recognize that the situation is serious
- Do not pass judgment
- Reassure that help is available

Encourage treatment and Expediting getting help

Phone calls:

A. If urgent crisis:

1. Take Veteran's name, last 4 (if possible), phone number, and address
2. Consider calling 911 and request safety & welfare check; or
3. Call the Veterans Crisis Line and request that they outreach the Veteran

B. If non-urgent:

1. Take Veteran's name, last 4 (if possible), phone number, and address
2. Call the VA Suicide Prevention Coordinator nearest your location for guidance, as needed

Encourage treatment and Expediting getting help

In-person:

A. If urgent crisis:

1. Consider transport plan to the Emergency Department (ED) of the nearest VA or closest local ED
2. Call the Veterans Crisis Line on behalf of the Veteran and request guidance

B. If non-urgent:

1. Inform the Veteran about the Veterans Crisis Line – give the Veteran a wallet-card
2. Consider helping the Veteran access or re-connect with outpatient mental health (MH) services at the VA or Vet Center
3. Call the VA Suicide Prevention Coordinator nearest your location for guidance, as needed

Reporting Suicidal Behavior

- Why its important to report....
- Report the following information to the Suicide Prevention Coordinator closest to your location:
 - A reported death by suicide
 - A suicide attempt (potentially injurious behavior with any intent to die as a result of the behavior) within the past twelve (12) months
 - Acts or preparation towards engaging in Self-Directed Violence, but before potential for injury has begun
 - Suicidal ideation with suicidal intent or undetermined intent (i.e., suicidal ideation with believable plan and intent to die, or if intent cannot be determined)
 - Any undetermined Self-Directed Violence (behavior that is self-directed and deliberately results in injury of the potential for injury to oneself)

An example of partnership....

- Jennings Co. VSO, Mike Eastman
- “It’s a Wonderful Life” – Suicide Prevention of Jennings County
- Invited key stakeholders in his community to a meeting at the local library
- Invited the Indy VA Suicide Prevention Coordinator and local Community Mental Health Center Psychologist as speakers
- Hosted the meeting, brought finger foods
- Result: a meaningful, organized discussion about reducing Veteran suicide at a community-level

Contact Information

Travis Field, MA, MSW, LCSW
Suicide Prevention Coordinator

Richard L. Roudebush VA Medical Center
1481 W. 10th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202

- Office: 317-988-3213
- Cell: 317-430-5557
- travis.field2@va.gov